

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2325

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02722

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSP, UN

SUBJECT: OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE: NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES

1. CANADIANS BRIEFED US JUNE 28 ON STATUS OF THERE DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS ON HANDLING OF NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES ISSUE IN THE OSC. SOVIETS APARENTLY HAVE MOVED TO SOME EXTENT, TELLING THE CANADIANS THAT THEY WILL BE WILLING TO HAVE A SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE WORKING GROUP. THEY HAVE, HOWEVERN NOT AS YET AGREED SPECIFICALLY TO MENTION "SAFETY STANDARDS" AS ONE OF THE SUBJECTS WHICH EXPERTS SHOULD DISCUSS. MOREOVER, SOVIETS CONTINUE TO RESIST ANY EARLY CONSIDERATION BY LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE ISSUE, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE WILLING TO SUGGEST THAT THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE MIGHT PLAY A ROLE ONCE THE OSC HAS ACTED UPON THE SUBCOMMITTEE'S FUTURE REPORT. (THAT MEANS THE LSC WOULD NOT BE ENGAGED UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1980, AT EARLIEST.)

2. SOVIETS AND CANADIANS HAVE ALSO BEEN EXCHANGING DRAFT LANGUAGE ON NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES FOR INCLUSION IN OSC REPORT TO THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY. CANADIANS TELL US THEY WILL DISCUSS PROPOSED LANGUAGE WITH A GROUP OF 20 LIKE-MINDED STATES AFTERNOON OF JUNE 29 AND SEEK THEIR SUPPORT FOR A MORE PRECISE MANDATE FOR S&T SUB-CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMITTEE, AND AN EARLY ROLE FOR THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE, PERHAPS FOR A REVIEW OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL LAW BEARING ON SAFETY IN SPACE.

3. WE ENCOURAGED CANADIANS IN THEIR PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION. AT CANADIAN SUGGESTION, WE AGREED TO COMMENT INFORMALLY TO SOVIETS THAT WE HAVE DISCUSSED DEVELOPMENTS

WITH THE CANADIANS AND THAT WE FEEL THAT A MORE PRECISE
MANDATE IS NEEDED FOR THE STSC AND AN EARLY ROLE FOR THE
LSC. LEONARD

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